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THE
WRECK OF THE ORION:

A TRIBUTE OF GRATITUDE

FROM

THE REVEREND J. CLARKE, M.A.,

INCUMBENT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF STRETTFORD,

NEAR MANCHESTER.

————— “quæque ipse misserrima vidi,
Et quorum pars magna fui.”

VIRG. Æ. II. 6.

N.B.—THE ENTIRE PROCEEDS OF THIS VOLUME WILL BE GIVEN TO
THE “GOOD SAMARITANS” TO WHOM THEY ARE DUE.

Third Edition.

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P R E F A C E

TO THE FIRST AND SECOND EDITIONS.

THAT there are some circumstances of personal experience, which the heart may feel too keenly and deeply to admit of their being immediately committed to paper, scarcely any person needs to be told. Nor can it be less plain, why, under such circumstances, one becomes like the sensitive plant,—afraid of exposure even to the touch of those, who only desire to handle from the sincere interest they take in our welfare.

It was thus, at least, with the writer of the following pages—that, notwithstanding the repeated request of friends, he hesitated, for a period of several months, to attempt an account of his second departure for Scotland, and of the trying event that occurred on the way. At last, however, having decided to *begin*, he was determined (D. V.) to *complete* it,—as an humble record of God's *sparing mercy*, for which he can never be sufficiently thankful; and also as a due memorial of the many kindnesses conferred upon him, from motives of sincerest sympathy.

The private friends, permitted to peruse the manuscript, would, he knew, make every allowance for any expression of affectionate feeling towards those at home, and at the same time for the minuteness with which he might be led to dwell on persons and things connected with the narrative. But, as the work went on, and fresh reports reached him from “the scène of action,” the thought arose—that the publication of this personal narrative might tend to increase very materially the sum raised for the people of Portpatrick, and be a more lasting *tribute of gratitude* than any which had yet been offered.

The only question was—how to expunge those parts scarcely suitable for publication. He soon found that this could not be effected without either rendering what had been written very incoherent, or re-writing it from the beginning. And there being, in his own mind, objections to *either course*, much stronger than that sought to be removed, he resolved to send it forth, just as it was,—relying on the indulgence of his readers, and on their due consideration of the object he has in view.

With regard to the contents, he is not aware of having given just cause of offence to any party. His remarks on the late trial, every candid mind will

doubtless admit. And as to criticisms, he will at once disarm them, by freely owning all the imperfections of style and language, which the most fastidious taste may be disposed to lay to his charge.

For the frontispiece, *the only correct representation* of the *sinking* "Orion" at present published, the Author is indebted to the well-known genius of a clerical friend (the Rev. E. L. Berthon, Fareham, Hampshire), who sometime ago invented a "perpetual log" for the measurement of the speed of sailing vessels, and who has now in hand a life boat—an invention of still greater importance—called forth by the very event described in this book. To mention here—in what all its superior properties will consist, would, of course, be premature: but there is reason to be assured it will be of *enormous capacity* when in use, and yet of very *diminutive size* when hoisted on the davits; ready at any moment for lowering; impossible to be lowered into the water at one end before the other, and equally incapable of sinking; while the expense will be so moderate as to put it within the reach of all owners of sea-going and coasting vessels. Would that, there had been something of this kind long ago! The boats, hitherto provided for occasions of emergency, have been found not unfrequently to be

rather a hinderance than a benefit—especially from the mode in which they are suspended and wrapt up for the sake of preservation. It is quite time some improvement should be made both in the boats themselves, and in the general management of them. Even a landsman can tell so much, who professes to know very little about such matters.

Grateful acknowledgment is likewise due to the numerous friends and strangers, who have kindly encouraged the Author in this attempt. He now leaves it in their hands, and once more requests their indulgence in the perusal.

Stretford, February 15th, 1851.

THE THIRD EDITION

Requires only a few remarks by way of Preface.

The fact that many of those, who kindly subscribed for a copy of one of the two former editions, and could not be supplied, and that more, who knew of the publication only by report, have tried in vain to procure it; this will be deemed quite sufficient to account for the appearance of a third edition,—and proves, moreover, to the no small gratification of the Author, how fully and feelingly his *object* has been appreciated.

He now presents to his readers something more than a mere personal narrative; and has no doubt, that, the numerous “additional particulars,”—“the plan of the coast,”—and the view of the “harbour of Portpatrick,” taken by a lady, whose pencil, time, and thoughts are ever occupied in promoting objects of Christian benevolence,—will be considered great improvements to the volume.

To her and to all, from whom he has received important favours he begs to tender his sincere thanks.

Stretford, August 1st, 1851.

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THE WRECK OF THE ORION.

CHAPTER I.

It was quite clear, no more could be said. To persist any longer in pleading excuse, after so much had been done to render practicable that *second journey to the Highlands*, would have manifested on my part something very like ingratitude. And yet, that there was still an indescribable reluctance to go, will appear from the following remarks, penned down on the first page of my journal.

“Saturday, June 15th, 1850.

“Is it possible that I am about to visit, once more, the grand and interesting lochs and mountains of Scotland, which I had thought never to see again? I can scarcely believe so. *Why*—I know not; or what can be the meaning of all my objections. The preparation already made,—the well filled bags lying on the floor at my feet,—and the very book in which I am now writing, presented to me by my dear sister H—— for the purpose,—all this seems to be a strong practical argument that I really am going again. May God’s blessing go with me, and continue with those I am leaving behind!”

On the next page was written—

“Monday, 17th. Could not have a brighter day:
* * left Stretford at 10h. 15m., and Manchester
11h. 30m.; arrived at Liverpool 12h. 30m.: secured
an airy berth: dined at Fisk’s.”

The vessel had been advertised, to leave the Clarence Dock, at three p.m. In order, therefore, to reach it without bustle, I engaged a cab at about a quarter-past two; and, having made various inquiries as to her exact whereabouts, at length managed to get on board: but after seeing my berth, complaining to the steward about the smallness of the cabin, and requesting to have some better accommodation as soon as “the list” should be put into his hands,—I found to my great discomfort, that my large shawl or wrapper (a *sine quâ non* for the voyage) had been left behind at Fisk’s. What was to be done? If not taken with me, it might be lost by the time of my return from Scotland; and yet to get to Castle-street and back in less than half an hour, appeared a difficult matter—especially as there was no cab or car in the way.

In reply to this, the thought arose, that possibly the vessel might not be quite punctual to the moment; and so I hurried away—now running—now walking, and asking almost every twenty yards which was the nearest and shortest course to take; then, snatching up the shawl in breathless haste, put myself again into a cab, giving orders to be driven to the Clarence

Dock with all possible speed. But there—still greater was my discomfort, on perceiving that I had been set down at the wrong side of the dock—wrong at least at that moment—inasmuch as the iron bridge leading to the steamer had been drawn back, to permit three or four vessels to pass through one after another.

It seemed as if I *must* be left behind,—as if I *must not go!*

Never, to my idea, did vessels move so slowly; and seldom have I felt myself to be in a more awkward predicament. To walk, or run round, to the other opening, would certainly have taken a longer time than there was to spare; and to pass over where I was (the bridge unclosed) was impossible. There was, therefore, no alternative but to wait, either patiently or impatiently. In the meanwhile the steam appeared to be getting more and more “up” (as they say), and making more and more noise,—the passengers on board too were evidently bidding adieu to their friends,—and at length a call was made to those on the pier to go to the ropes. It was an exciting moment. I shouted, “stop!” “stop!” with no little alarm. Happy had it been for me, had that shout not been heard, and the bridge remained unclosed a few minutes longer. As it was, I was able to jump on in time; and in doing so, congratulated myself that at last I was sure of my passage.

CHAPTER II.

“AND this is the ‘Orion,’ so often spoken of as being the largest and best sailing steamer to Glasgow,”—was the inward silent reflection with which I then looked round and to the other end of the vessel.

Certainly, she did appear to be alike remarkable for bulk and beauty,—much larger than the “Commodore,”—more handsomely fitted out—and far more crowded with passengers.

Observing the steward going towards the fore cabin, I was reminded of my former request, and therefore followed him. He soon told me, that “every berth in the vessel was engaged, and that many passengers would have to do without,”—a piece of intelligence which gave me to understand, that my only wise plan was, to be thankful for what had been secured, and make the best of it. That fore cabin might be said to be divided into two compartments by the staircase, at the foot of which were folding doors opening into those compartments. The one I was to sleep in contained only six berths, viz., two on each of the three sides—the door-way being on the fourth. The berth secured was the uppermost of the two on the right side. And as there was only the length of about

eighteen inches of bench behind the door for everything in the shape of dress, &c., and three or four carpet bags had already been heaped upon it, there was of course no room for anything else in the place, except on the top of the berths.

These little matters it is necessary to state here, in order that what follows may be more clearly understood.

The vessel, as will readily be supposed, was much too large to admit of being quickly turned round within narrow limits. But as soon as she had made her safe escape through the mouth of the dock, and reached the open Mersey,—where her immense engines could move freely,—then she almost seemed proud of her own powers, of her own length and breadth, and especially of the large and cheerful assemblage of passengers whom she bore away, apparently with so much ease.

It was indeed a pleasing sight; and the fine afternoon conduced much to render it so; for all could be on deck, and lounge or read, converse or walk about, just as they felt disposed.

Even now, I could fancy myself on board, pacing to and fro—wending my way among the crowd—or seated at the end of the “companion,” taking notice of all that was going on.

“How happy does that middle-aged, Saxon-haired lady appear, sitting there with book in hand, and

little girl by her side. She might be far away from the crowd—under some shady tree in the garden, or in her own drawing room,—so little is she disturbed by those around her. The gentleman who has come up to her, with hair and complexion so like her own, is perhaps her brother. No; there is something in his manner, which convinces me it must be her husband, and that the little girl is a grand-daughter, niece, or some other tender protégée. How fondly and yet quietly she clings to her beloved guardian! Oh, the sweet confiding affection of children! ‘*Except—ye become as little children,*’ &c.* How often may be seen instances, to whom the Saviour would point in exemplification of His meaning, when He uttered those words.

“The three gentlemen there (if my ideas of physiognomy do not deceive me) are literati: at least their countenances bespeak more than ordinary intelligence. They might be members of the British Association. Indeed, as the meeting of that association is just about to take place in Edinburgh, I think it is very probable they are.

“But who is that young, tall, light-haired person, so attentive to the four or five ladies close by? His white tie and *tout ensemble* would lead me to set him down for a clergyman. He has now offered his arm to the eldest, and is walking to and fro, as if for the

* Matt. xviii. 3.

purpose of conversing on matters of more than usual interest,—matters of religion, probably, and the concerns of eternity.”

Such were my ruminations in silence for the first half hour or more,—interrupted only by a reference now and then to my Guide Book, in anticipation of what I hoped soon to see.

Had some known face presented itself—some old friend with whom to while away the hours of the evening; or had some stranger accosted me in a friendly manner, though of different religious views to my own, as on board the “Commodore,”*—it would no doubt have served to rouse me up; but I had no spirits to be the commencing party. The only person towards whom I felt at all disposed to make the first advance, was a short, stout, comely looking old gentleman, who, from his dress and appearance, might be taken either for a clergyman or a doctor. His broad brimmed hat and gold headed cane led me to conjecture the former rather than the latter: and his evident affability towards all around convinced me of his kindness and good nature.

At one time, he was conversing pleasantly with the ladies; at another with the gentlemen:—now with one who seemed to be his daughter, and now with the captain of the vessel, as if he took great interest in her progress.

* Mentioned in a former MS Journal.

“Who can he be?” was my inward inquiry. “What is he? It would do me good to converse with one so agreeable in his manners, so experienced in all that is going on in the world, and so exceedingly well acquainted, probably, with the peculiarities of Scotland.” I began to feel the more desirous of such a privilege for the sake of those at home, as well as my own. For as yet nothing had occurred, of any deep interest, to pencil down in my note-book for their perusal. The account of this my second trip from Liverpool to Greenock, instead of being like the first, full of different subjects of conversation, would be a *blank*. I should have *nothing* to write about—nothing to tell them?

“What could be the matter with me? Why shrink within myself, and allow the afternoon to pass away, and the evening to approach, unimproved?” These questions were more easily asked than answered. At length, as one dissatisfied with himself, I resolved to retire to my night quarters, and there, D.V., sleep away the strange depression that had crept over me.

How far the vessel had then sailed, or what the exact hour of the evening was, I noticed not, but am disposed to think it was about six o’clock.

One of the berths in our small cabin had then already received its tenant for the night. The passenger to whom it belonged, was lying at full length on the outside of the clothes, and *quite dressed*. And,

looking about in vain for some place on which to throw my coat, I came to the conclusion that my wisest plan would be to follow his example—using my coat, paletôt, and wrapper, as over-coverings.

Of course the blessing and protection of God were asked ; but I must confess there is something in the cabin of a vessel, which interferes much with this duty and privilege, so far as my experience goes. The coming in and going out of fellow-passengers,—the dislike to the least appearance of religious ostentation,—and the difficulty of *feeling alone* with God at such a time,—*these circumstances*, inseparable from cabin accommodation, have always been to me a great hinderance to the spirit of prayer ; so much so, that I have frequently wondered whether others have felt the same.

There was sufficient room, even in my narrow berth, to kneel ; but my prayer, I fear, arose more from the feeling of duty, than from the privilege and comfort of committing myself to the Saviour's watchful care. It was a cold, short, lifeless offering—of which I had good reason to be ashamed !

Alas ! how often do we forget in our acts of devotion, that HE to whom we present our petition is the *Great God of Heaven and Earth* ; and *we*, His sinful creatures, who, but for His interposing mercy, must have been long since consigned to the place where darkness and death reign for ever and ever ! To be permitted to address HIM as a Father in Christ ; to be

encouraged to look up to Him as a "God who has *so* loved us, as to give His only begotten Son" to die for us; to be enabled to rely upon Him as an Almighty Saviour who watches over us, and orders all things concerning us, for our best welfare in time and eternity. Oh! how is it, if we know this, that we can ever for a moment think lightly of it, or conduct ourselves as if we did!! Of one thing there can be no doubt, viz., that in proportion as the habit of prayer becomes cold and formal, in the same proportion does spiritual life in the soul become weak and feeble; and consequently in the same proportion must there be less fitness to combat against coming trials!

To return to my story, or rather to my cabin accommodation,—for it will be found that the above remarks have much to do with it. Once laid down, the berth I had chosen did not *feel* so small as I fancied it would. There was a degree of comfort in it, which far exceeded my expectation. But the constant pacing of footsteps overhead was an effectual barrier to all attempts at sleep. Tread—tread—again and again—so the monotonous sound continued for hours. In the meanwhile, the little cabin received its appointed inmates, one after another, giving me reason to hope, that when once quietly settled down in our places, we should all go to sleep. Just then, however, the under-steward came in to light the lamp that was by my head, to my great annoyance.

"Don't put the lamp there," I called out, as he

was fastening it in its place.—“I can’t do with it there.”

“But this is the proper place for it, sir,” said the youth, “and there is no where else to put it.”

“Then we will do without it,” said I again.

“But it must be lighted, sir,” he replied, in the same tone of firmness. And there it was left burning, with its bright blaze right before my eyes.

Gradually the sound of footsteps on deck became less perceptible, and that of the engine and paddle-wheels more composing. I could tell, by the smooth and regular motion of the vessel, that the night was as calm as the day had been; and congratulated myself upon having no symptoms of sea-sickness. Sometimes I wondered whereabouts we were. Then a feeling of sleepiness came over me—a kind of dozing sleepiness—’till the discomfort of lying so long in boots obliged me to push them off; when, lying down again, I hoped to doze away more pleasantly during the remainder of the night.

The relief thus obtained, was certainly a change for the better:—Yes: and, as will be seen, it was also an unconscious preparation for an event, alike heart stirring in the extreme and altogether unexpected.

I think I must have been dozing for about half an hour, when the *loud noise*, as of a *tearing* or *rending* of the vessel, *startled* and *roused* me up.

“What is that!” was my immediate mental exclamation: and at the same instant lifting up my head

to look over the side of my berth (without knowing why), I saw to my amazement boots and clothes swimming, and the water rushing upwards with great force; which shewed too plainly to doubt what had happened! Not a moment was to be lost. Down I jumped, as one had already done, and found myself knee-deep in the water! We hurried up the cabin stairs, when the thought of the possibility of saving my black leather bag and its contents induced me to turn back, seize hold of it (together with a coat which I supposed to be my own), and so hasten again to the deck.

And THERE! (The scene is still as vividly before me as it was then.) *There* came, pouring up from the main cabin, men and women (or more properly speaking, ladies and gentlemen), just as they had risen from their beds, some half dressed, and many in their night dresses only; all too much alarmed to care about appearances,—running from one side of the vessel to the other—wringing their hands in silent dread—and then exclaiming—“She is going down!” “She is going down!” “Oh, what shall we do!” “Lord have mercy on us!”

That the vessel was indeed sinking rapidly at her bows was quite clear to us all. My first object was to go to the person who had command of her. No one could be seen exercising anything like authority. The wheel was abandoned, and the crew I knew not where. We seemed to be left entirely to ourselves.

I then asked aloud with all the voice I could muster, "Where is the captain?" I called again, but with the same fruitless effect. Had he fallen overboard, or was he asleep below? "Where is the captain?" I once more shouted. In two or three minutes afterwards he was in the midst of us,—and, immediately getting up on the end of the skylight, urged us not to leave the vessel, with the assurance that "*she would not go down.*" "Are you telling us the truth?" asked some of the ladies close by, in imploring tone. He declared he was. After which *I neither saw nor heard him give one single direction; or exert himself in the slightest degree in behalf of any of those, who had been entrusted to his care!* Where he went, or what he did more, I, for one, could not tell. And there I was—among the crowd of distressed passengers—anxious like many others to do anything that might be of use:—longing to act *with* them under some intelligent experienced guidance:—and running here and there to see and try what could be done! "Is there nobody to *tell* us what to do?" I exclaimed: and then discovered, to my great comfort, that we were not far from the shore, and that a lighthouse was there. What shore it was, or what lighthouse,—I enquired not—thought not—cared not.

Hearing a knocking with hammers, as of the unfastening of a boat, near the paddle-box, on the larboard side of the vessel, I hastened to that part, and had scarcely been there a minute, before my attention

was called to the other side of the vessel by the confused cries of “the boat is swamped!” “Oh dear! they are drowning!”—Cries—alas, which, on looking down from the bulwarks, I found to be but too true! Nor was it difficult to account for the sad catastrophe. How it must have happened was plain enough. With the eager and anxious hope of being saved—too many had crowded into that first boat; or else it had been lowered from the vessel unskilfully—(which was not to be wondered at, considering that *there was no directing head*,) and being capsized, all, except the two or three clinging to the keel, were plunging—sinking—and drowning around it!—A number of us immediately seized hold of one of the ropes by which the boat had been lowered, and pulled, and pulled again—but though we pulled the ropes—they brought not with them either boat or living being!

I looked again. And then—Oh dreadful sight! some had already sank to rise no more,—and others were giving the last faint movement of the hands and head!!

This was to me the most distressing scene of all. It seemed to say, Behold the struggle which you must shortly undergo! You will know what it is to find a watery grave!

I thought of the dear ones at home, and how little they were aware of the terrible ordeal I was going through! I thought of my people having probably heard my voice for the last time. Yes, and I did not

forget to think of, and look up to that Saviour, who has promised, "*When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee.*"

Then, once more seizing the ropes supposed to be attached to the swamped boat, my call for help was instantly complied with, and half a dozen of us pulled away till the end of one came into our hands, extinguishing thereby all hope of doing good—just as a boat from the shore arrived, to relieve the two or three sufferers clinging to the keel.

Meanwhile, as may be imagined, the work of destruction was rapidly progressing. Every moment brought with it some new catastrophe. The bows (or fore half of the vessel) were now covered; and the water coming in contact with the fires and boilers, caused a terrific explosion. Both water and fire flew up with a dreadful roaring noise. Many of us at once concluded the vessel had ignited, and would, in a short time, be consumed in flames. But in a few seconds this subsided.

Immediately afterwards one of the large boats was safely lowered, and "got off" with perhaps a dozen or more persons in it—"Ladies of course"—every reader would NATURALLY suppose. No! If there were any ladies at all among them, they could only have been very few. The majority were said to be sailors and firemen!! *i. e.* those who ought to have remained to the last, and exerted themselves to the very utmost, to save and send off the passengers; but

who, like the captain, seemed to consider it the best part of valour to take care of themselves.

The vessel had by this time gradually heeled over towards the land, till it was impossible to stand on any part of the deck. And while many were thus crowded together, on the lower, *i. e.* the starboard side, and some obliged at last to cast themselves into the water—on bits of wood—planks—or spars—or whatever was nigh at hand,—I had placed myself, like several others, on the upper bulwarks, near the stern: where, discovering a man hanging by a rope (*which proves how perpendicular to the water the deck had become*), I succeeded in drawing him up to the same place.

On his left was seated and clinging to one of the davits a young girl, having no covering over her shoulders,—being evidently just as she had risen from her bed,—and to all appearance waiting calmly and quietly for what was to follow. It is now my regret she received no word of comfort from me at that awful moment of suspense. And yet it was indeed but a moment!

We had scarcely time given us to commit our souls into God's hands, ere—with one terrible, instantaneous engulphment—the whole vessel sank down—carrying us along with her into the depths of the sea,—and causing at the same time (by the very rapidity of *that* downward sinking) the air inclosed in the saloon to force off the top of the skylight,

and so to throw us up again. Such at least was my impression.

Then commenced indeed the *struggle for life!*

I saw no one near. What had become of those, who had been near me the moment before, I knew not. Nor did anything to cling to come in my way, except a kind of box deprived of one of its sides, which, when grasped, turned over and over with me; and thereby, instead of assisting, soon exhausted the little strength I seemed to have. "It must go," I said aloud—"And now, Lord, THOU art my only hope. Oh, save me! Lord, save me! Lord, save me!" was my repeated, earnest prayer,—with the full recollection of Peter in my mind, and with the firm belief that the same Divine arm, which rescued him, could rescue me. There was no longer coldness, or lifelessness, or formality in my petition. It was then a matter of life and death! As to my powers of swimming, they were so small, that I could place no dependence upon them. A few yards were all I could accomplish at the best, how then was to be accomplished the quarter of a mile, which at that time separated me from the shore! Never before did the short but expressive prayer of sinking Peter rise from my heart so earnestly. Never before did I feel so much the utter helplessness of myself, *in a bodily point of view*, or rely more singly and solely upon the saving arm of Christ. And never did I more effectually realize His gracious interposition than on that

trying occasion. But for the merciful exercise of His almighty power, I must inevitably have sunk and perished, like the many others who had already found a watery grave!

Struggling on, and continuing to lift up and repeat that short prayer from my very inmost soul, and with the full view of the circumstances which first gave rise to it—I fancied I saw a boat at a distance. My strength was exhausted. My arms could scarcely move. “Lord, save me!” was poured forth in a cry, if possible, still more earnest than ever. It was a boat: but for a moment it seemed to be turning in another direction. (Oh, none can tell but those who have experienced what it is to be in such a situation—with a boat near and apparently passing by.) “A boat, a boat,” I called out as loudly as I could. The men saw me not, but heard the voice; and just as I felt myself turning round, perfectly powerless, their strong hand was upon me and dragged me in.

There I lay at the bottom of the boat, for some time,—conscious enough to hear what was said, but quite unable to move:—with what feelings of thankfulness can easily be understood.

By and bye, they came to the body of a woman, which they no sooner laid hold of than they declared to be dead.

Being dragged in like myself, she was thrown across my legs.

By that time, I had sufficiently revived to try to

lift myself up, and extricate myself from under the lifeless body of the poor woman. It was, however, a vain attempt, and more than I had strength for. Whilst these feeble efforts were being made by me, the boatmen rowed on, in their standing posture, looking round for more floating bodies. The next person picked up, was in a less exhausted state. He was able to sit upright on the bench. And immediately after him was rescued a person, whom, to his great joy, he found to be his wife or sister. There could be no doubt of that, from the greeting which took place between them, and the expressions of gratitude they poured forth both to God above, and to the boatmen by their side, whom they recognized as His instruments. They evidently felt, as those, who had been raised up again to each other from the dead!

Meanwhile the boat seemed to be filling with water—so that I was still half covered with it: when, without noticing their expressions of gratitude, the boatmen told them to “bale out the water,”—and the man, taking off his wife’s bonnet, worked away with all his might.

At last I succeeded in my attempts to extricate my legs from their painful position, and to raise myself up on one of the benches. After which, being very ill, I knew not what more took place:—where we were landed; who brought me to a house; or by what means: nor had the thought of either house, or shelter, ever occurred to me.

The *whole* of this sad catastrophe, from the moment the vessel struck, to the moment she went down, was over in much less time than it has taken me to describe it. From ten to fifteen minutes may safely be stated as comprising the beginning and the end of the vessel's sinking.

But, now, what shall be stated with respect to that Providence of God, so plainly shown forth to me in every circumstance?

That God "orders all things" concerning His people, is a doctrine long ago settled in my mind: and that, both in a temporal and spiritual point of view, His arm has often most wonderfully interposed in my behalf, could easily be proved:—a fact which, while it convinces me more and more of his undeserved "*goodness and mercy*," leads me to feel at the same time the more deserving of condemnation in ever forgetting Him, or becoming lukewarm in His service.

(1.) The reader will remember my objection about the smallness of that compartment of the fore cabin in which I was to sleep: but had it been large and full of passengers, how much more difficult would have been my escape. Seeing the water rushing upwards so rapidly and with such force, the general consternation among the startled and terrified sleepers would have caused great confusion. All would have crowded to the door at once—and not a few, probably, have been suffocated or trodden under foot in the water.

(2.) The lighted lamp by my head had been put there against my wish. Of what service it soon became to me must be evident. For though the *rending* sound was strange and startling, yet, had no water appeared, I should probably have laid down my head again,—mistaking the gurgling up of the water from below for that which is so usual without—till it had reached the sides of my berth, or roused up some of my sleeping companions—when escape might have been impossible, or at least much more difficult.

(3.) A very short time previous to the striking of the vessel—I had taken off my boots, in order to lie more comfortably. I need not attempt to prove that this circumstance—so trivial in itself—tended much, humanly speaking, to my preservation. Boots in the deep water, it is well known, conduce, more than any thing else, to impede even good swimmers, and especially to drown those who have no skill in that art.

There is another circumstance, still more singular and affecting to my mind; but to mention it here would anticipate what has yet to be recorded.

CHAPTER III.

HAVING been landed somewhere, and brought to a house by some means,—*I know not how*,—my nerves were again excited by the blazing out of fire from the fire-place, (which immediately filled the room with smoke,) and by the noise of several voices urging that it might be “put out.” The fact is, the good people, in their hurry to provide a warm hearth for the shipwrecked strangers, had forgotten to take the straw out of the chimney. The mistake was soon rectified, and in the mean time the kindest attention paid to me. According to the only word I uttered, “a doctor,” they immediately procured one; but how they succeeded in doing this so quickly surprises me even now. He must have been near at hand, perhaps in the house—for the word was scarcely uttered before he was at my side—helping to take off every article of clothing, and to put me into the bed, in the corner, where one had been put before me. This was no sooner done, than hot brandy and water was brought, with the request that I would swallow a little: the very smell was most disagreeable. Then tea was brought, which seemed to do me far more good. In a short time something like warmth ap-

peared to return, though my teeth chattered noisily and incessantly for more than an hour after.

“But who was the fellow-sufferer lying by my side?”—it will be asked—“and who were the other wrecked persons crouching over the fire?” They formed an odd and (notwithstanding all that had passed) an amusing group. Although there was too much to mourn and weep over *then*—yet, in some respects, the picture they presented was such, that I can scarcely refrain from smiling at it *now*: not, that one was wrapped up in a blanket; nor, that the other two were in their shirts only; nor, that their conversation was noisy and incessant:—but, especially, that one of them, who was without a leg, frequently hopped about the room, to get anything he wanted,—apparently careless about the crutch he had left behind, and quite indifferent as to who might come in, during his kangaroo-like peregrinations. It was so unusual—so odd—and so ludicrous, that under any other circumstances I could not have helped laughing heartily. That, however, was no laughing season!!

They were all three steerage passengers—labouring men—and seemed to vie with each other in relating the peculiarities of their escape. The one wrapped in a blanket—an Irishman—and (as might be supposed) the noisiest and most talkative of the three—“had kept fast *hoad* of the *lather* till the boat came.” The other, with the one leg (according to the best of

my recollection), said he “stuck to th’ rope till he was picked up:” and the other—being an excellent swimmer—had “swam to shore.”

My bed-fellow was apparently older, and much more serious. He did sometimes join in their conversation, but always with evident thoughtfulness of the greatness of the mercy he had experienced; and every now and then groaned aloud in heartfelt grief, as for the death of some dear friend or relation. On my inquiring if he had lost any relative or friend—he said “he had lost the best of masters, and he feared he had also lost his son.”—“My dear old master”—he continued—“I little thought my long service would have ended in this way. He had gone to bed, and was asleep when the vessel struck. When I went and told him what had happened, he immediately got out of bed, put on his drawers, and wanted to dress himself. But I said—there is no time to dress, sir. We must go up instantly: and—first putting his gold watch inside the waistband of his drawers, and taking his gold-headed stick with me, in my hand—I helped him up the cabin stairs, as well as I could. It was heart-rending! All the while he was praying and committing his soul to God. I was with him—keeping him up, and helping him to hold on—to the very last. And when I found we were both going, I put a rope into his hand, and told him to try his best not to let it go. Then came the terrible swallowing up of every-

thing—and I saw him no more. But there is no doubt of his being drowned. Dear master! dear master!”

This description—reminding me at once of the nice cheerful old gentleman, with whom I had longed so much to converse, in the early part of the passage—made me more inquisitive about his profession and pursuits.

“Was he a clergyman?” I asked again.

“No—he was a doctor—a physician,” said the man—“Dr. Burns, of Glasgow—a chief proprietor of the vessel, and very well known.”

“He was a Free Churchman, of course.”

“Oh, no—he was an Episcopalian.”

“And your son, about whom you are afraid; what was he?” was my next inquiry.

“My son belonged to the vessel—one of the crew”—said the man—“I saw him at the wheel two hours before she struck.* His turn ended at twelve. And whether he is among the living or the dead I don’t know:” so the poor fellow groaned again.

Alas! It might have been, that the same dreadful catastrophe had separated from me, for ever in this world, one nearer, if not dearer, even than the best of masters, or than an only son.

Well might tears of thankfulness pour down at

* Either “one” or “two hours:” not certain which.

the thought, that my own dearest ——— was safe and well at home !

Two or three hours having thus elapsed, we began to feel a little anxious about clothes. Though evidently the weakest of the whole party, yet the warm blankets and the hot tea had done me great good. Meanwhile, both host and hostess came in constantly,—attending to our various wants in the kindest manner possible. Who we were, or what we were, never seemed to trouble either of them. We had been wrecked—were in distress—and that was enough for them to know. On asking the husband if he could accommodate me with a shirt, till my own was made dry enough to put on—he said, in the greatest good humour imaginable—“You shall have anything and everything I can get you. I don’t know, however, whether there is a shirt left. One has got my only spare coat; two have what trowsers I could muster; and shirts—all I have, I think, are already put on,—but I’ll see! If there is one you shall have it.”—So he left the room, to tell his wife what more was wanted, and presently she came with the last and best shirt there was.*

Nothing, in short, could exceed the kindness and attention of these two persons. We were constantly asking them questions about the reports of “who were saved and who were not; where and what was

* Her name is Mrs. Douglas. She is not his wife, but his mother. Her youthful appearance led to this mistake. He was at home with her at the time and is now at sea.

being done with our clothes; how soon they would be dry," &c.: all which inquiries were answered in a manner, that showed a most sincere desire, on their part, to gratify our every wish.

About six o'clock we had a visit from some person in office, who came in great haste to see how many we were in number, and to take down our names; and also to say that "the 'Fenella' steamer had just called at the port, and would receive on board any of the wrecked passengers of the 'Orion,' who might wish to sail off immediately for Glasgow."

In reply to this, the Irishman, at once, cried out "Och, I'll go:"—so said the other two:—and then all asked together "Where are our clothes?" "My trowsers are so and so"—"My shoes are so and so:" "Will you be as quick as you can, good woman?—we want to be off by the 'Fenella.'" They certainly lost no time. Their clothes—what they had—were brought up and put on wet as they were. And every article was produced that had been found in their pockets—even to the smallest piece of paper, and honestly and carefully placed before them: indeed, not only what belonged to those three, but everything belonging to the whole party.

Then, for the first time, the thought of my *watch* occurred to me; and not seeing it on the table, I inquired "what had become of it?" With regard to my purse—that had long before been thrust under my pillow. "*Your watch*, sir, (said the woman) *is in whisky*."—"In whisky," I exclaimed. "Yes,

sir, (said she) to take the salt out of it. There it is, on the chimneypiece, with that other gentleman's.—It was the best thing we could do with them.” And there, sure enough, they were, in a large tumbler glass, over-head in whisky. I had never heard of such a method before ; but contented myself with the idea, that boatmen and persons living constantly by the sea-side must understand such things much better than anybody else ; and there, therefore, the watches continued for some time afterwards.

Lest there might be any mistake in the way of writing, or spelling, the names, I requested the person who had come to ask for them, to give me the paper, with pen and ink,—and so wrote them down myself. Whilst doing this, it struck me, that a message might perhaps be conveyed by the same vessel to Mrs. —, at Rothesay, who would expect to see me by one or two o'clock in the afternoon, and would (I was quite sure) be extremely alarmed and shocked—as soon as, the report of the wreck and dreadful loss of life reached her. I therefore scribbled the following brief note, on the only scrap of paper that could be got—trusting that some one on board the “Fenella” would kindly forward it to its intended destination.

“My dear Mrs. ———

“*Saved!* thank God! I hope, D.V., to be with you sometime to-day.

“Yours very sincerely,

“J. CLARKE.

“Portpatrick, Tuesday, 6 a.m.”

The note, thus committed to the kindness of strangers, and what might be called accidental circumstances, reached Rothesay, in due course;—but the *list of names*, obtained *officially*, and regarded by me as the first and best mode of conveying the news of my safety, to all at home, *was never published*; by which culpable neglect, or omission, on the part of those entrusted with it, the most painful anxiety was caused to many families.

But not to anticipate. Our three noisy companions having hurried off to the “Fenella,” Dr. Burns’ butler and myself were now left quietly and comfortably together in our little corner bed. It somewhat surprised him to hear that I was a clergyman. When he first saw me—he said—“he gave me up. He thought me too far gone to survive.” Of course, we had a good deal of conversation—which need not be entered here.

The visit of his son was our next surprise—a young man of about five-and-twenty—in proper sailor costume, and without any signs of having undergone much hardship. The father had sent out many inquiries, in order to hear if his son was among the saved; and when he saw him was much affected. That the son should appear so well, and so much as usual in his dress—(*i. e.* as if nothing had happened) created no longer astonishment in my mind, on hearing that he was one of those who escaped *so bravely* to shore, in the first boat! He accounted for the vessel’s fatal course and wreck, by saying that “*the*

compass could not be depended upon;—had been known to be wrong,” &c.: an explanation which appeared to me to make the matter worse, instead of better. For if “the compass could NOT be depended upon”—*why use it?* if “*known to be wrong*”—*why not have another assured to be right?*

What my opinion of the whole catastrophe is, shall be stated by and bye.

Then more and more exciting reports were brought in. “So and so had died, as soon as she had reached the shore.” “Dr. Burns’ body was the first brought to land after the wreck.” “Several others had been found,” &c., &c.;—all which made us long to be up. But what could we do? Our clothes, though placed close to the fire, were still quite wet; and to put them on, in that state, would have been madness.

It, at length, occurred to me, that if I could see one of the Ministers of the place, he would probably be good enough to accommodate me with everything needed: therefore, calling up once more my good-natured host, I requested him to go to the Free Church Minister, mention my name, &c., and ask him if he would kindly favour me with a visit at his earliest convenience. Away the man went immediately, and in a short time, Mr. Urquhart came with great seriousness depicted on his countenance, and in the kindest manner imaginable. I received, his held out hand, not only as a proof of Christian sympathy, but also as a mark of the Saviour’s love,—and was

for a moment too much overpowered to express my thankfulness. He offered up an earnest prayer—spoke as became a Christian Minister—said that he had heard of, but did not know Mrs. ———, to whom I was going;—and begged I would consider his house my home, so long as I remained at Portpatrick. In the meanwhile, he would go and get me what clothes he could find, having already supplied several others,—and being only afraid, that I should find those he brought much too small for me. May the blessing of that Saviour who said—“*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of one of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me*”—abundantly pour down upon that excellent man and his numerous little family,—making all things work together for their present and eternal happiness!

But again, it will be asked—“What of the poor fellow by my side?” “Was nothing done for him?” Yes, the very same kindness was shewn towards him as myself:—clothes were sent for his use also, and like myself he was invited to go to the Manse. Thus supplied, we were not long in putting them on.

Perhaps there is no figure so ridiculous as that of a tall person in clothes much too small for him. At any other time I should have been the first to laugh heartily at my singular costume—of shoes, that would only go half way on my feet,—trowsers that reached little more than half way down my legs,—coat which left the wrist of my hands uncovered—a *white tie*, and

a *sailor's cap*! As it was I was too glad to get anything in the shape of covering, and too much aware of the circumstances and appearance of others, to feel at all alarmed that I should be remarked upon.

We had both great reason to be very thankful: and before we left that shelter in need—where we had experienced so much kindness—we fastened the door—knelt down and joined together in prayer, with hearts full of gratitude and praise, for all the sparing mercy we had received from God, and for all the kind treatment we had received from the good people of Portpatrick. We met again for a few minutes at the Manse, but since that day I have never seen my companion in affliction. That he often thinks of the neat little room,—the three noisy persons by the fire,—the bed in the corner,—and the exhausted individual that was placed in the blankets by his side,—of all this I have no doubt. He will often call to mind too the conversation that passed between us,—the visit of the excellent Free Church Minister,—and the last prayer we offered up together in that room. May the lesson thus taught, never be lost either upon him or upon me!

CHAPTER IV.

It might now be supposed, that the most harrowing part of my story had been told. There are yet, however, circumstances to be recorded, that make me almost dread to proceed.

In our little room and little corner bed, I had partly imagined what was going on out of doors—as fresh reports reached us. But to *see* it all!—to see the different groups of men and women at the cottage doors, on the parade, and by the water side—all engaged in discussing the matter in evident excitement—while among them stood the wrecked strangers, relating in their own way what they had gone through, and answering the various questions put to them about the immediate effect of the shock, the number of the passengers, or the conduct of those who had the management of the vessel:—to see here and there, in what dresses they could get, respectable females hurrying by in the deepest distress—anxiously hastening to hear if the body of some near and beloved relative had been found:—to see truck after truck of dripping bags, boxes, and portmanteaus, which—as they came up—one could not help mistaking for the dripping remains of those with whom we had mixed and moved

only a few hours before, and like which, but for God's sparing mercy, our own might have been borne along to the same place:—this far exceeded the scene I had imagined, and took me so much by surprise, that for awhile I felt as one bewildered.

Walking on, almost mechanically, to the north end of the village, where most of the people were collected together,—and ascending the rising ground which had till then concealed from my view both the smooth sea and the top-masts of the ill-fated “Orion,”—I was more bewildered than ever.

It seemed to me absolutely incredible, that any person *in his senses* could have steered the vessel in such a course,—so *near* and so *direct* for the shore,—to say nothing of the sunken rock on which she had struck! And yet there she was—lying, apparently, not more than 400 or 500 yards from rocks (I do not know how high) and as *if she had made right for them!*

Proceeding still further, I climbed up the steep hill, and sat down on the top directly opposite to her,—to ruminate yet more closely on her exact position, her distance from the shore, and the course she must have been taking when the dreadful shock occurred. But the more I studied these matters, the more unaccountable they appeared.

A wreck (*without a storm*) of a well-built vessel—in *excellent order*,—when the *sea* was as smooth as glass, and the *night* quite fine,—when the *land* could be clearly seen, and, by a practised eye, even *the very*

PLAN of the COAST
OF
PORTPATRICK.
on which the *ORION* was wrecked

form of the rocks! To what other conclusion was it possible for me to come from all these circumstances, than that the men, to whom our lives and property had been entrusted at the time, must have been either asleep, or drunk, or both! I felt I could come to no other: and may add, it is *now* my confident impression, that any other person, having the same circumstances before him, would have felt necessitated to come to the very same conclusion.*

I might have continued there much longer, had not the remembrance of Mr. Urquhart's kind invitation roused me up to make the best of my way to the Manse—a new house situated on an eminence, at a little distance from the front, and towards the north end of the village. There was no difficulty in finding it. Everybody seemed to know Mr. Urquhart so well, and where he lived, that I had but to mention his name, and the least child in the village could have answered my question.

There, according to the expectation I had formed,

* The accompanying "Plan of the Coast of Portpatrick" will enable the reader to judge for himself. It was the opinion of some that she must have struck on one of the "Barnock rocks," and then drifted down to where she sank; but, on being examined by the divers, there were no traces, or marks of any kind, to confirm that idea. The "*Outer Ward Rock*," next examined, presented abundant evidence that it was *there* the dreadful *rent* was made. No doubt, had the "Orion" passed safely over the "*Outer Ward Rock*," she would then, in another instant, have dashed against one of the "*Barnock rocks*,"—equally *fatal to the vessel*, though affording to the passengers more hope of escape.

from the little before seen of him, he gave me the kindest welcome, and introduced me to his sister, not less kind than himself. In fact they are just the persons to be most effectually useful on such an occasion. Alike removed from reserve and officiousness in their manners, and influenced very evidently by the Spirit of that Lord and Saviour they serve—they at once won the perfect confidence and heartfelt esteem of the strangers thrown in their way. In them I soon felt I had met with a Christian brother and sister, with whom it would be most comforting “to hold sweet counsel,” when they should be more at leisure. But they had too much to do just then, and too many other sufferers to look after, to stay with me a moment longer than was absolutely necessary.

Thus, my breakfast over, and other wants supplied, I was left alone, in the large arm-chair by the fire, with the hope of getting a short sleep, while Mr. and Miss Urquhart went out to relieve—to console—and to advise, as the different cases they met with might require. My thoughts, however, were too busy to admit of sleep:—they soon fled to the dear fire-side circle at home,—to the people of Stretford, to the work I had in hand, and to all that was still needful to be done. Yes, and they soon discovered what was the great object of God’s Providence in bringing me through the trying ordeal I had experienced, so as to fill my heart with wonder and praise !

“Well—and what was that object?” the reader asks. This part of my account I would fain not have mentioned, or at all events reserved to the last. But this much shall be stated in answer to the question. Owing to various circumstances, a despondent feeling had begun to creep over me for some time previous to my leaving home. I saw things going wrong, which I wished to rectify, but could not. My ministry seemed to me not to prosper as well as it had done: and something like the language of Elijah might well express on some occasions the state of my feelings. “It is enough!” “What fruit is there in my labours?” “How can I ever hope to be useful at Stretford?” &c.:—thoughts of unbelief, which ought not to have been indulged for a moment; and in correction of which the severe ordeal just gone through was confessedly a most useful lesson.

When I said aloud in the water (on finding the box a hinderance rather than a help) “it must go!” I then felt I had no power to rely upon,—no arm to save me but the Lord’s. I experienced in my own person what *He* can do, and is willing to do, in the most trying emergency. In the deep waters He had been with me, and had graciously heard and answered my prayer.

What more could be required to convince me of the unreasonableness and sinfulness of all my former doubts? It was as if He said to me—“Doubt no

more:”—“Be not afraid—only believe”—“and the seed sown, and the efforts made, in MY NAME, shall prosper—IN MY OWN WAY and TIME.”

It was to some good account therefore that I thus occupied in serious reflection my quiet solitude by the fire, in the comfortable large arm chair;—and the lesson was still more strongly confirmed by what followed.

I wished to know, if as yet anything had been heard or seen of my carpet bags among all those which had already been brought up from the wreck; and, on going out to inquire about them, met Mr. Urquhart with a lady on each arm, who, from their appearance, it was easy to see, were fellow-sufferers.

Having introduced me to them both, and conducted them to the Manse,—he then accompanied me to the public building—where everything taken from the wreck was placed: a building that might be taken for a small Town Hall, and situated at the south end of the village. Passing through the entrance—the first door, on the left, opened into a large room, containing bags, boxes, portmanteaus, coats, wrappers, &c.:—a scene of wretchedness enough to sicken the heart beyond expression,—but only a preparation for the still more dreadful scene in the next room.

Oh I can never forget that room! It was not so large as the other—but the FLOOR! how shall I describe what we saw! I cannot dwell on so sad a sight! I would rather close the door, and leave those

twenty-five bodies lying there,—without one further remark.

Is that the result of the last night's dreadful catastrophe!! The intelligent countenances—the manly step—the cheerful intercourse—aye and the bright-beaming looks and merry laugh of lovelier forms;—are they all thrown aside for an appearance too shocking to behold! Oh, how sad the change!!

Let us turn away from a spectacle far too distressing to dwell upon. Let us prefer to lift up our thoughts to that *brighter region*, where, it may be hoped, the souls of many, perhaps of all of them are at REST,—and rejoicing around the throne of the Redeemer, with the holy angels, and “the spirits of just men made perfect,”—and where too therefore even those “*vile bodies*” being “*changed*” and made “*like unto His Glorious body*” shall one day be,—and share for ever and ever in the blessedness of heaven.*

The two ladies, Mrs. and Miss R——, to whom I had been introduced, were to dine with us at three.

* Since writing the above, Mr. U—— has informed me, that “the building, in which the dead were laid, is not a public building, but a private dwelling-house. It was formerly the residence of a Collector of Customs, (when there was a full Custom-house establishment at Portpatrick) and was very recently occupied by Captain Hawes, the Superintendent of the harbour. Being empty at the time of the wreck, the proprietor, Mr. Murdock, who is Factor to Hunter Blair, Esq., of Dunskey, kindly opened it for the reception of the dead bodies.”

Compared with theirs, mine was a light case. One of them had been before me to the house of death,—to see the remains of her dear departed husband; the other, his daughter by a former wife, was too weak and ill for such a visit. When they last saw him, or how he was engaged, I know not; but have reason to feel assured that he retired to rest before the shock took place.

His wife and daughter were among the first to dress and hasten on deck, after the vessel struck. And Mrs. R—— no sooner discovered what had happened than she ran down into the cabin, called out the name of her husband, and, receiving no answer, felt satisfied he was not below. Still she found him not—saw him not—during the whole time that elapsed between the striking and the sinking of the vessel. She and her step-daughter kept close to each other; and, finally placing themselves near the stern, remained there—clinging to a rope—till the vessel went down,—and, indeed, till they were taken off by boatmen, with the greeting that deserves to be recorded, “*Never mind ma’am, you are come among a Christian people.*” Being thence rowed to shore,—like all the other saved passengers, they were most kindly conveyed to one of the cottages, and treated with the greatest care: while also (in accordance with their urgent request), every endeavour was made to discover what had become of Mr. R——.

That he was saved, they felt almost confident:—

they could not persuade themselves to think otherwise. Reasons and arguments to lead to this conclusion crowded on their minds. "He was so strong in the wrists:—had on other occasions proved himself capable of such great bodily power;—he could not but be among the saved!"

It was well for them, they were thus allowed, for the first three or four hours after the wreck, to indulge hopes and feelings so encouraging. For thereby they had time given them, somewhat to recover from the first shock, and be better prepared for the second;—when the ring, they had described to be on his finger, was brought to them by Mr. U——— conveying intelligence too certain, alas, to doubt.

Sad messenger of woe! And yet from thee
Shone rays of hope and immortality.
Thy gem and form were emblems not unknown
To those two mourners—weeping—and alone.

From the marks upon his hands and forehead, it is supposed he must have had hold of some rope, and received a blow that rendered him powerless. He is well known as the author of the "Traditions of Lancashire,"—had purposed to be present, with his wife and daughter, at the ensuing meeting of the British Association at Edinburgh:—but,—"*man proposes, and God disposes!*" Instead of proceeding to that "modern Athens," and there joining in the large

assembly of the most intellectual, scientific, and learned living men, in the kingdom, perhaps in the world,—he was called away, we hope, to join another, much larger, happier, assembly—the throng of the Redeemed, in Heaven.

To meet his two mourning survivors at the Manse, and converse with them on their heavy affliction, and on all that had taken place during the day, was, to me, a far more agreeable thought, than an invitation to any other party could have been. Strangers as they were, they had my sincerest sympathy. I saw, in them, what *another* would have felt, had it pleased God, not to rescue me from the deep waters!

Here must be mentioned one more circumstance connected with the cottage, where the butler and myself received so much kindness. Calling at that cottage, on my way to the Manse, to inquire if the clothes I had left were yet dry, and the watch in a condition to be taken away, it surprised me very much to find, that *the coat*, which had been hurriedly snatched from the fore-cabin, *was not my own*,—and that in one of the pockets was a bundle of papers, neatly tied together, as being apparently of some importance. “The coat is certainly not mine”—said I to the woman. “I shall, of course, leave it in your hands. But these papers may be of value: it will be necessary to put them under the care of the person

commissioned by the authorities of this place to receive such things." They were accordingly forthwith taken to the public officer at the building I had just visited—and put into his hands, with the full explanation, as to how they had come into mine; and also with the request, that he would faithfully deliver them to whomsoever they belonged, if such person could be heard of among the saved.

An equally important duty to my family circle at home had next to be fulfilled. Only one post left Portpatrick during the day; and the post-office would be closed at two. Hastening, therefore, to the Manse for that purpose, with the perfect conviction that, if the news of the wreck had already reached Manchester, the published list of the saved would spread with it, I could not help picturing to my mind the conflicting feelings it would call forth,—the sorrow that so many had been lost, and the joy that some were saved,—the universal surprise and dismay that on a night so fine, a sea so smooth, and a course so well known, any vessel like the "Orion" should have been lost! My letter was, of course, written in terms calculated to soothe such excitement, and to convey correct information, as far as had then been obtained. For if, even at Portpatrick, reports varied, as to whether there were 200 or 250 originally on board, and whether 50, 100, or 150 had been saved from the

wreck ; it was only reasonable to suppose they would vary still more in Liverpool, Manchester, and elsewhere.

The exact number of the lost is, to this day, an uncertainty, and will probably ever remain so. Between fifty and sixty bodies have been found, of which some were identified, and others not; and upwards of 150 persons are said to have been saved. That is all that can be stated.

CHAPTER V.

“It has become proverbial,” says an ancient latin historian, “that friendships ought to be immortal.” We may well ask “on what grounds?” For, as any thinking observant person must be aware, there are many kinds of friendship:—that “of the world,” for instance, which, says St. James, “is enmity against God:” a friendship, which needs no introduction, which arises from the natural love of the same worldly pleasures and practices, and extends more or less throughout all classes of the worldly-minded, according to that saying of our blessed Lord, “*the world will love his own.*” But that such friendship is really worth having, or that it can make a person happy in the time of affliction, or that it can be comforting to reflect upon in a dying hour—requires no argument to disprove. Every one knows, that, when a friend is most necessary, such friendship loses all its assumed charms, and vanishes away!

There is also what may be termed *School*-friendship, *Business*-friendship, *College*-friendship, *Dissent*-friendship, *Church*-friendship, &c.; arising from the fact of parties having been brought together—having similar interests—maintaining similar views—and

promoting similar objects; but yet none of them, *necessarily, lasting friendship*. The only kind of friendship, which can justly be considered *lasting—for time and eternity*—is—true CHRISTIAN FRIENDSHIP—*i. e.* the friendship of those, who “have in them the spirit of Christ,”—and who, *therefore*, wherever they may be situated, under whatever circumstances, and whether members of the same *branch* of Christ’s *visible* Church, or not, “*love one another.*”

THIS it is, indeed, which constitutes the real *unity* of Christ’s *true* Church. Because true believers are influenced by the same spirit to love the same Saviour, they cannot but “love one another.” There may be a difference in outward worldly circumstances, and in external discipline and government; it may not be possible for them, in the present state of things, to act FORMALLY together as a *mixed society*—in order to carry out the purposes of the religion they profess. Like the soldiers of an allied army, though they have all the same object in view, yet they may feel most in spirit for the battle, when they are each fighting according to their own accustomed mode, and moving in their own respective rank and file;—all the while, nevertheless, sympathizing with each other, praying for each other, encouraging each other, helping and protecting each other;—and looking forward to a time, when, *externally*, as well as *internally*, visibly as well as spiritually, they shall be *one*; and no distinctions or differences of any kind shall be among

them. May that time soon come—and “CHRIST” be
“ALL IN ALL !”

Such being my views of the source and extent of true Christian friendship, it will easily be understood, that I was quite prepared to enjoy the society and conversation of those gathered around the hospitable table of the Free Church Manse.

The Minister and his sister, with the two afflicted mourners, above alluded to, and myself, comprised the whole of that party. “*It was good to be there*”—a melancholy yet profitable occasion ! I believe there was not one, who had not felt what it is to be influenced by the Spirit of Christ.

However we might differ in some minor points, we were all agreed in the love of Him, to whom we professed to belong,—the Great Head and Saviour of the Church Universal. We could all therefore sympathize with each other, not only as mourners for departed friends and relatives, or as affected by trials and afflictions ; but also, as having like comfort in looking to Christ by faith—and relying upon his never-failing goodness and mercy. We could speak of His love, and dwell upon His infinite wisdom, in every, even the most trying, dispensation. The tears which flowed in sorrow, also flowed in gratitude, while each recounted to the rest the part he or she had taken in that day’s events. Hence, can it be a matter of surprise, if then commenced a friendship not soon to be broken off? No—years may roll

away,—and many miles separate us: we may never see each other again: but, that we can ever forget that occasion of meeting together, or any of the conversation that passed between us; that we can ever cease to take a deep interest in one another's best welfare; that we can ever feel or act towards each other in any light or character than that of sincere Christian Friends—is surely far beyond the reach of human probability. I trust so!

After dinner, Mr. Urquhart took me to see a poor woman, who, he believed, was the person picked up, as dead, and thrown across my legs in the boat. She was just alive and delirious—in a high state of fever—gasping for breath—and still appearing to herself to be struggling in the water. The people of the cottage manifested the greatest anxiety for her recovery. Had she been some near and beloved relative, they could not have been more attentive to her wants and comforts. So likewise the surgeon of the place, who came in while we were there; and who, I could see, had no hope of any change for the better. Mr. U. offered up one more prayer to God in her behalf, before we left her bed-side; and whether she was finally restored or taken to her rest, no account has reached me.

Returning to the Manse, I had scarcely sat down, before the servant came in to say, that a person at the door wished to speak to me. It was the owner of

the coat, before-mentioned. By what means he discovered it, I am unable to state. He called to inquire about the papers, which he said were of great value. It gave me real pleasure both to congratulate him upon his safety, and to tell him that his papers were equally safe:—describing the person to whom they were given, and assuring him, he had only to ask, in order to obtain them.

To come to the close of that eventful day, when the two mourners had left us, and all the members of the Minister's household, even to the little infant (*motherless infant*) in arms, assembled together for family prayer. Being requested to act as Chaplain, I gave out a few verses of the 103rd Psalm, to which Mr. U.'s eldest son (about twelve or thirteen years of age) set the tune, and which was sung with sweet and simple pathos, far superior, in my mind, to the singing of the grandest Oratorio.

The Scotch metrical version of this Psalm is as follows:—

“ O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord ;
And all that in me is
Be stirred up His holy name
To magnify and bless.

Bless (oh, my soul !) the Lord thy God,
And not forgetful be
Of all the gracious benefits
He hath bestowed on thee.

All thine iniquities who doth
Most graciously forgive :
Who, thy diseases all, and pains,
Doth heal, and thee relieve.

Who doth redeem thy life, that thou
To death may'st not go down :
Who thee, with loving-kindness doth,
And tender mercies crown."

I then turned to my favourite 23rd Psalm; and—after reading it through, as well as my feelings would permit—dwelt upon the Lord's *Shepherd-like* care of His people,—His supplying them with innumerable privileges and blessings,—His "*restoring*" or bringing them back again to His fold, even after they have strayed away,—His "*leading*" them, from first to last, "*in the paths of righteousness*:"—all "*for His*" own "*name's sake*," and with a view to the carrying out of that free sovereign love toward them, which induced Him to die in their behalf. Nor was omitted to be noticed by the way,—how the Psalmist speaks of the various characteristics of God as exercised, not merely to believers *in general*, but to himself *in particular*, saying, "The Lord is MY Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh ME to lie down in green pastures," &c.: which, as might well be supposed, suggested an inquiring personal application to ourselves. The third verse—reminding me so forcibly of the moment when there was "*but a step between me*

and death”—was difficult to get through. Indeed, the whole Psalm, always affecting, was especially so that night: and never on any former occasion did I take up the concluding words with more believing appropriation, “*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*”

Sincere and heartfelt thanksgiving for undeserved mercy to ourselves; earnest supplication for comfort to the sufferers and mourners around us; and humble acknowledgment of God’s infinite wisdom and love in all His dispensations, however mysterious, constituted the prayer with which this Scripture comment was concluded.

I need not say how profitable to me was that memorable occasion, or how often I think of that Family Church. May the Saviour’s richest blessing ever rest upon it!

CHAPTER VI.

WHETHER a vessel would call for us in the morning, or not, was quite a matter of uncertainty. There was, however, some reason to hope so. And, should that hope be realized, it was my intention to proceed to Glasgow, and reach home as soon as possible.

I had need of sleep; but, though laid down in one of the most comfortable of beds, the excitement kept me awake for hours. And then, when at last sleep came, the noise of steam startled me, and the idea of the sinking "Orion" at the same time revived in all its terrors. Scarcely had my fears subsided, before a knock at the door was heard, and in stepped Mr. Urquhart to tell me that the "Princess" had just arrived, and would take forward any of the saved passengers of the "Orion" that might choose to go. Of course the opportunity was too important to be lost, and therefore in a few minutes I was dressed and running down to the pier.

Here, by the bye, just at the place where it might reasonably have been expected my narrative would proceed as rapidly as my movements, I am reminded of what may well appear a singular omission,—that,

in addition to the two ladies before alluded to and myself, Mr. U—— brought with him after dinner to the Manse another wrecked stranger—a youth, the son of Mr. ——, of Liverpool. His uncle, an excellent swimmer, was drowned; and he, a boy of about twelve or thirteen years of age, was saved. They had taken their passage in the “Orion,” to meet another uncle, (the captain of the ——, then off Greenock,) before he sailed for Australia. The boy had looked forward with great pleasure to that interview: and, among other results from it, had no doubt of receiving a substantial addition of pocket money for the next half-year. Like myself, he had been roused up from sleep; was already on board the “Princess,” when I reached the pier; and glad of the prospect of getting forward so soon and so conveniently. What particularly brought him to my remembrance, at this part of my narrative, was Mr. Urquhart’s kindness in putting into my hands a sum of money, sufficient to defray his expenses home, should Captain ——’s vessel have sailed; and in requesting me to take charge both of the boy and the money. He also introduced me to a gentleman on board, who soon proved himself to be one of the kindest of men; and whose attentions shall be mentioned presently.

For a short time all was hurry and bustle: and no one was more active and thoughtful than our good friend—the Free Church Minister. I looked around

for my old host, the boatman, at whose cottage so many of us had been first sheltered and restored to warmth and strength; but he was not there. It would have given me great pleasure to shake him by the hand, and leave something in it by way of a remembrance,—or rather let me say, by way of due acknowledgment, for the important services he had rendered. As it was—the fulfilment of this wish was necessarily postponed for a day or two. At length all being on board who intended to sail, the captain made signs for the vessel to be unmoored, when Master —— and myself bade an affectionate adieu to dear Mr. Urquhart, with hearts more full of gratitude than words can express.

The “Princess,” though not equal to the “Orion,” either in bulk, or in beauty, has generally been considered a well-built and well-fitted vessel,—her apartments neat and airy,—and her captain always at his post. Strange to say, when urged by others to go in the “Orion,” I expressed repeatedly the desire to go by the “Princess,” in preference: and stranger still, that, after having left Liverpool in the former, before reaching Glasgow, I had my wish—in a way never dreamt of!

There were many on board; and, of course, those of us, who had availed ourselves of the opportunity, somewhat increased the number. No sooner, how-

ever, were we really off, than the greatest curiosity was manifested to hear our vivid accounts of the sad event. The gentleman, to whom Mr. U. had introduced me, went from person to person, apparently as one who had taken his passage for no other purpose than to gather information on the whole matter. I frequently stood by him; and was not surprised at the strong remarks that were made upon Captain Henderson's conduct. And, while it is not my wish to repeat those remarks,—yet as there appears to have been an entire shutting out of evidence at the late trial, so far as the passengers of the “Orion” are concerned,—and the question considered seems to have been chiefly, if not altogether, whether it was right or wrong for the captain to have been down below at that part of the voyage, and whether he or the second mate were more to be blamed for the striking of the vessel,—I think it only just, to my fellow-passengers and myself, to express our opinion on another question, which ought also to have been taken into due consideration, viz.; the captain's conduct *after the shock took place*. With regard to the right or wrong, propriety or impropriety, of his being below at the time when the vessel struck, we are certainly not competent to judge; but we can judge—we can form an idea, of what a person, having authority and command over the vessel, *ought* to have done at the lowering of the boats, and the sinking, and drowning of many committed to his care;—and we can feel

assured also, that had Captain Henderson been *present*, to give *proper direction* as to the lowering of those boats from *first to last*;—*had he* STOOD BY (with sword in hand if need were) to *insist* that the children and female part of the passengers should be first sent off to shore,—not a *man* on board that sinking vessel would have uttered a word of complaint or objection; but, on the contrary, every one would have lent his hand most readily, and laboured most diligently, to carry out such orders of Christian benevolence and humanity. Nay more—we have little doubt (humanly speaking) had this been done—not a tenth part of those, who are now no more, would then have met with a watery grave. This I stated on board the “Princess,”—have frequently stated since,—and, once more, state now—as the firm conviction of all the saved passengers of the “Orion” with whom I came in contact, and certainly as my own.

To proceed. It was easy to distinguish, from the passengers (who had sailed in the “Princess” all the way from Liverpool) those who had embarked at Portpatrick. No one could mistake our lately dried clothes and odd costumes. Most of us had something on, which had been borrowed and did not fit very well.

But here, too, I have to acknowledge the continuation of the same unbounded kindness as that experienced at Portpatrick.

The gentleman, before referred to, whose name I do not feel at liberty to mention, not only prevailed on the boy, committed to my care, to go down to breakfast, after my own attempts to persuade him had failed, but also induced me to partake of some refreshment, by bringing it up on deck; and then affected me to tears, by divesting himself of his own plaid and paletôt, and insisting that I should put them on, together with a black tie, which he supplied, as being more suitable than my white one to the wearing of a sailor's cap. In addition to these benevolent offices to a perfect stranger, he moreover offered to lend me any amount of money that I might want;—as also did another gentleman, connected with a firm in Manchester.

Such examples of Christian sympathy and self-denying generosity deserve to be recorded, spread far and wide, and handed down to future generations, as worthy of imitation. They bear on the face of them the stamp of a *feeling* heart, and of sound Christian principle. They manifest a practical regard to the golden rule—“*Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.*” And, like the beams of the sun with which we were favored, they shine forth, and give a cheerful influence upon men and things—leading every thinking, and especially every *Christian* mind, to *look upwards*, and *thank God*.

Leaving Portpatrick about three o'clock, a.m.; we reached Greenock about twelve. There Captain —— was waiting to receive the boy committed to my care. His heart was full—as well it might! He thanked me, with tears, for my services to his nephew: but I told him, it was to the excellent Free Church Minister of Portpatrick, and not to me, his thanks were due. Others also had evidently been waiting on the pier, with the earnest hope of recognizing some of the saved: and tears, both of joy and sorrow, might be seen on several countenances.

The sail from Greenock to Glasgow occupied, as usual, about three hours.

Very different was that sail up the Clyde from the one so much enjoyed two years before; when, being the first time, and full of life and spirits, I took careful notice of every hill and mountain, near and far off,—every house, castle, and monument, that came in view as we sailed along,—and by persevering inquiry was enabled to collect together numerous scraps of history, anecdotes, &c., &c.: alike interesting and amusing to this day. My second passage up that river was under very different circumstances. Weak and weary as one just rescued from the deep waters; instead of eagerly collecting information on the various objects around, it was my earnest wish to reach home as quickly as possible; to greet once more objects far more interesting and beloved; and to assure them of my safety.

We arrived at Glasgow about three, p.m., where I separated from my kind friend Mr. ——— with many thanks for his services; and, still wearing his plaid and paletôt, &c., made the best of my way by “minibus” to the Caledonian Railway Station. There—it was no little disappointment to find, that no “through train” to Manchester would start before seven o’clock. What to do with myself till that time—was a question more easily asked than answered. To walk about Glasgow *in slippers*, even had my spirits been ever so good, was not a very palatable idea. Besides, had my appearance been altogether unobjectionable, I needed rest and sleep too much to take any pleasure in sight seeing. The thought of some small quiet respectable hotel seemed most agreeable, and being fortunate enough, after persevering inquiry, at last to meet with one, I ordered a mutton chop—was accommodated with a bed—slept soundly for two or three hours—and so was the better prepared for the next part of my journey, in a second class carriage to Manchester.

Taking care to be at the station in good time, under the hope of seeing some known face among the passengers,—as no such face presented itself, I concluded there would be no friend with whom to while away the tedious hours of the night. In a short time a respectable looking person stepped into the same compartment, and immediately commenced conversation on the exciting subject of that day—

“the wreck of the ‘Orion’”—by asking if I had heard any fresh accounts, how many were lost, and how many were saved? &c.

When he found out that one of the saved was sitting next to him—like the other Christian sympathizers before mentioned—he also manifested unlimited kindness. If at different stations, for example, any new comers were about to place themselves opposite me, he respectfully requested I might have sufficient room to put up my feet, stating his reasons for such a request; and on my attempting to lie along on the bench for the purpose of sleeping more comfortably, he, at the same time, took from under him the large wrapper on which he had been sitting, and insisted I should use it all the way. These attentions, trifling as some may think them to have been, went to my heart: and to omit a brief notice of them in this memorial, purposing to be a “TRIBUTE OF GRATITUDE,” would, in my opinion, be an act of a contrary tendency, and worthy of strong reprobation. We parted at Parkside: his intended course being towards London and mine to Manchester.

And now,—*approaching nearer home*,—I must be excused from entering into further detail. The feelings which arose on finding myself once more at Stretford—among my own people—and in the bosom of my own family, need *no description*.

There is one circumstance, however, that must not be passed over, or omitted to be recorded in this

chapter ; a circumstance most instructive and gratifying to me, and such as can never be effaced from my heart,—viz. : the additional convincing proof of my people's warm affection,—manifested, not less by their deep and anxious concern for my welfare, during the dreadful suspense, than by their personal and public expression of thankfulness for my restoration, and also by their immediate generous co-operation in presenting me with a purse of gold, amounting to the sum of *two hundred guineas*. That many dear friends in the neighbourhood readily joined them in this kind act of generosity, increases very much its value in my estimation: and that HE who “orders all things in heaven and earth” has thus *overruled—to my own and to their blessing*—the late trying event, by affording to *me* another indisputable ground of encouragement to persevere in ministerial faithfulness, and by giving to *them* another opportunity to abound in Christian fruitfulness,—both parties will doubtless admit. May we never abuse such “*goodness and mercy!*” May the lives which HE thus lengthens, and the blessings HE thus confers, be alike devoted to His service, praise, and glory !

CHAPTER VII.

THUS concludes, what may be considered, the narrative of my own share in the sad disasters and merciful deliverance attending the wreck of the "Orion."

Many additional particulars, however, must be called to mind, if the reader wishes for a complete history of all that took place on that occasion, all the efforts made in behalf of the sufferers, and all the means used to obtain for them their property, &c. He must remember, that, at the time the writer of this "Tribute of Gratitude" was receiving so much kindness at the cottage alluded to, and at the Free Church Manse, other saved persons were experiencing the same treatment at other cottages, at the Manse of the Parish Church, and at the houses of the more wealthy in the neighbourhood; especially at Dunskey, the residence of Hunter Blair, Esq., who was on the shore among the sufferers early in the morning, to offer and supply whatever his kindness and hospitality could suggest, and was soon followed by his lady for the same purpose. Their house was open to as many of the saved as could accept of the accommodation.

Several parties were taken to the Parish Manse, belonging to the Established Church. Mrs. R —,

HARBOUR OF PORTPATRICK

in a note, *lately received in answer to my inquiry*, states, that “she and Miss R—— were first of all conducted to Mr. Hannay’s cottage—where his wife kindly tended them,” and then adds “we went to Mr. Urquhart’s to dinner, and staid the rest of the day at their Manse, according to their kind invitation: but subsequently to seeing them, first Mrs. Balmer and then Mrs. Hunter Blair, whom I met in the village with Miss Urquhart, came to the cottage; and both kindly urged us to go to them. Mrs. Balmer sent us wine and cake immediately on her return home. We went to her on Tuesday evening and remained at the Manse till two o’clock on the Saturday morning. You know what the kindness of the Urquharts was; I need only say, Mr. and Mrs. Balmer’s was *the same*; and if you feel so much the hospitality of a few hours, how must we feel that of days.” The “Mr. Splatt,” who lost his wife and four daughters in all the vigour of womanhood, together with £800, the savings of a long life of care and industry, was also most kindly taken to the Parish Manse, where he remained for above three weeks—and received that consolation and comfort he so much needed. Besides these, may be mentioned, two others, the extent of whose sad bereavement seems to have stood next to that of Mr. Splatt. I allude to the two sons of Captain Mc. Neil of Colonsay. They had lost their father, mother, and two sisters. The latter by their joyous and interesting appearance had attracted the notice of many of the

survivors on the preceding day. One of them was said to have reached the shore alive—and then expired; but this report, which was widely circulated, I have good authority for contradicting. She was quite dead when brought on land.

The residence of Captain Hawes, R.N., was in a very short time (as might have been expected) crowded with half-naked and drenched sufferers. He and his family were roused from sleep by the first alarm: when with the promptitude of a good naval officer, he was almost instantly on the shore, to give orders, such as the sad circumstances of the event called forth; and then, placing himself in a boat, he was among the foremost to encourage and aid in the rescue of the numerous floating, or drowning passengers. To his active exertions, and the kind attention of Mrs. Hawes, the saved are deeply indebted. In testimony of this, I have great pleasure in supplying my readers with a copy of a most interesting letter, written by the son of Major Darroch, of Gourock House, to his cousin in London.

“MY DEAR S——,

“I write to apologize to you for not delivering your long letter to C——, but I trust you will excuse me, as I had no time to save anything but my life in the dreadful occurrence which I am about to relate. Mr. P—— and I set sail from Liverpool on the 17th, at half-past three in the afternoon, and there were about 200 passengers on board. We had a beautiful smooth passage, all the ladies remaining on deck till late. At half-past eleven, as we passed the

Isle of Man, we both went to bed. About half-past one in the morning I was woke by hearing the other gentlemen getting up and talking; and from whom I heard that we had run aground. I woke Mr. P—— and he dressed quickly, and ran up stairs: I in the meantime dressed very quickly, thinking there was no danger, as the sea was so calm, and the shore near; and had just got my trowsers, boots, and shirt on, when down came Mr. P—— saying we had gone ashore off the Irish coast (which I thought rather curious) and that I had better come on deck. One of the dead lights in our cabin happened to be open; and just then, the vessel sinking lower, the water poured into the cabin in a torrent. We both rushed on deck, accompanied by several ladies in their night clothes screaming piteously. When we got on deck I saw that the stern was high above the water and the bow perfectly immersed. We were only about 300 yards from the shore when we struck. The land was quite visible and the light of Portpatrick. We both went to the stern; and Mr. P—— left me there and went amidships, and I clung to the binnacle. The screams of the poor ladies, the prayers of the men, such as ‘Oh Lord help us!’ ‘God save us!’ and the roaring of the steam, were frightful.

“Presently the vessel heeled right over, till the deck was almost perpendicular. Then came the most frightful part of the scene; the poor women slid down under the lee bulwarks, and were swept out by the next wave—their screams were heart rending: just then the passengers launched the life boat, but it was swamped instantaneously, and all drowned except two. The seamen were too much terrified to do anything; but some jumped overboard and others ran up the shrouds. I, in the meantime, was clinging to the binnacle (a part just before the wheel, where the

compass was kept) and when she went on her beam ends, I immediately divested myself of trowsers and boots, and flung them overboard, knowing that I could not swim with them on. Having done that, I waited patiently for the result, crying to God for help, as also most of the passengers were. When I saw the steam coming up the companion, and heard it making a horrible noise, then I thought that all was lost and that we should have a precious blow up: so committing my life into the hands of God I plunged overboard. There were about six other men who jumped in with me; and they struck out so hard that they got me under water for about a minute: however, I soon got up, and swam boldly for my life. When I had swam about forty yards I came to a chest, on which a man was supporting himself. I made for it and reached it; but the seaman was in such an agony of terror that he knew not what he did; and in foolishly endeavouring to get to the top of the chest, he turned it round like a tread wheel. I could not shift my hands as quickly as he pulled it over, and so I was pushed right under the water for about two minutes. At that awful time, I felt the water coming in my ears and nose, and thought on home and my parents, and felt that I should never see them more, and was giving up: but just then I felt a new vigour in my limbs and determined not to relinquish life without a struggle. I dived down till I got free of the man and chest, and swam to some things which were floating near; and got something like a desk under one arm and a kind of wooden grating under the other; with these I kept up a long while;—but looking round I saw the large chest with the man who had stopped pulling it over: I swam to it therefore, and told him not to pull it, as our safety depended upon it. He remained quiet, but by way of precaution I still kept the wooden grating under

my arm. Soon another man joined us on the chest; he got on the end and told us both to strike out for the land—which we all did, and were getting on very well—when we saw to our inexpressible joy a large boat come round the point of Portpatrick. We all set up a shout “Oh boat, for the love of God! Oh save us! Oh we are drowning;” and all that sort of thing. Presently the boat heard us and approached, and you cannot tell the feelings which arose in my breast. Then the man in the bow laid hold of me to pull me in, I being too weak to scramble in. As soon as he had laid me on the forecastle, I fell right over into the body of the boat, but then I was so cold. I began to jump, and cut away into the stern sheets, and I sat down shivering like half-a-dozen rats. The other two men were pulled in more dead than alive; they lay in the bottom of the boat quite exhausted.

“We went on and picked up a poor woman off a piece of wreck, where she had been floating. Then we went to the wreck, which had gone down, I suppose, when I was under the chest. The water, then being low, was not up to her cross-trees; and there were a great many clinging to her shrouds, &c. We took a woman and her baby and about eight men off the wreck, and then made for the land. I all the time was jumping to keep myself warm, having nothing on but my shirt. When we got into the harbour I ran up the landing stairs. At the top there was an old woman with a shawl in her hand which she cast about me, and took me to her master’s house, whose name was Captain Hawes, R.N. They gave me some warm brandy and water, and put me into a warm bed, when I soon fell asleep.

“While I am having a comfortable nap at Captain Hawes’s house, I will tell you what befel Mr. P——. After he left me, he went to the companion: and when the ‘Orion’

heeled over, he cut up the shrouds, where he remained till the last boat.* He was the last to quit the unfortunate vessel. When I awoke I found him sitting by my bedside, all right. About six o'clock they signalled the Fleetwood boat to come in, as she was passing at the time: she did so. I had no clothes, but they borrowed for me in the village, trowsers that came down to my knees, a waistcoat that would not button, a grey coat all torn, and a pair of boots a mile too high, and a Scotch bonnet. So with these elegant vestments you may imagine what a figure I was. I went on board the 'Fenella,' and there found a large number of my fellow-sufferers. Some had no boots—some no coats—and we were altogether like a gang of gypsies. There were about six dead bodies on the shore when I left; and a boat came alongside the 'Fenella' with a lady and two men quite dead; the lady had some sea-weed on her face. The 'Fenella' captain charged us nothing. At Troon we got into the train to Greenock. I got into the omnibus at Greenock—just missing papa, who was at the post-office—and created a great sensation in the above-mentioned vehicle. One poor woman was so touched that she slipped a fourpenny piece into my hand, and was with great diffi-

* Mr. P—— went to the companion to deposit there some articles of value, which he had brought up from the cabin; but he had scarcely stooped, when the vessel fell over on her starboard side. "And then," says he, "commenced a mingled din of shrieking, screaming, crying, and praying. Several unfortunate beings were hurled into the pitiless water, never to recover themselves. Fortunately for me there was a rope hanging from the shrouds, at which I sprung with desperate energy, and earnestly did I thank the Almighty, when I found myself in the rigging. As soon as I got settled I commenced shouting for my young charge, but in vain—the confused, continuous clamour of the terrified passengers drowned my voice."

culty persuaded to take it back. When I got home I told mama that the 'Orion' was aground, not to alarm her; and she was so glad to see me, that she never noticed my dress; but when she went into the dining-room she told them, laughing, that I looked like a shipwrecked mariner. Papa soon came home and told her, and she was most awfully frightened, when she heard the dangers I had escaped.

"Captain Mc. Neil, of Collonsay, was drowned, with his wife and two daughters—his two sons were saved.

"My name was in the paper as Mr. T. and tutor—so you will know when you see it.

"I hope all are well: but I am too tired of writing. I can add no further particulars.

"So believe me, your affectionate cousin,

"D. D.

"June 19, Gourock."

While we admire the extraordinary presence of mind thus displayed by one so young, (a boy of 14,) the great courage and perseverance he manifested—amidst perils that were sufficient to paralyze many a stronger and older person,—we cannot but notice how much, under God, he was indebted for his speedy recovery (like many others) to the kind and prompt attention of Captain Hawes and family. To this must be added the following public acknowledgment, afterwards presented to Captain Hawes by Messrs. Thomson and Kidston, of Glasgow, when they visited Portpatrick in the November month of the same year, as the delegated members of the committee of the

subscribers, and for a purpose which both the address and the reply will explain.

ADDRESS.

“To Commander EDWARD HAWES, Esq., R.N., General Superintendent of Portpatrick Harbour.

“DEAR SIR,—The committee of subscribers to the fund to reward the boatmen and others who were instrumental in saving life at the wreck of the ‘Orion,’ in June last, were anxious to show to you the appreciation in which your valuable services on that occasion and afterwards are held by the public generally, by presenting you with some substantial token of their regard.

“But being prevented from this by your generous self-denial, they embrace this only other method left them to thank you for your valuable and disinterested services.

“The circumstance, that the first man who discovered the danger of the vessel ran directly to you, speaks much for your character; and the cool foresight with which you made your arrangements, and gave your orders, and the intrepid conduct you displayed on board of the boats, fully justified the confidence placed in you, and has made it a matter of thankfulness to the survivors, and to the public generally, that an officer of your presence of mind and influence was so near at such an emergency.

“May you be long spared, and increasingly useful, to an obliged and grateful country.

(Signed)

“JAMES LYALL,
GEORGE THOMSON,
THOMAS KIDSTON,
WILLIAM ANDERSON,
PHILIP MACINTOSH ”

REPLY.

“DEAR SIRs,—I have sincere pleasure in receiving the document you have done me the honour to present to me, expressive of the sentiments of the survivors of the wreck of the ‘Orion,’ for the part which, under Divine Providence, it was my happiness to take in the assistance rendered them in the hour of peril. This public testimony of regard for my services on that occasion, added to that received by letter from many of the survivors, is indeed most gratifying.

“In abstaining to partake of the awards from the donations of the survivors and the public, I have the satisfaction to see the boatmen enjoy the full benefit of the subscribers’ generous liberality towards them,—a liberality that testifies to all on our coasts the value set upon prompt assistance.

“I am,

“DEAR SIRs,

“Yours sincerely,

“EDWARD HAWES, Commander, R.N.

“To the Committee acting for the survivors of the ‘Orion.’”

Particular mention must also be made of Mr. Robertson, the surgeon of Portpatrick, who was not only among the first to go out in a boat to the sinking vessel and save life; but, during the whole time afterwards, was indefatigable in rendering professional service to the sufferers. As a small acknowledgment, and with the earnest request that he would accept this mark of their gratitude, the committee presented him with a silver snuff box bearing a suitable inscription, and ten pounds.

With respect to Mr. Hannay, to whose cottage Mrs. and Miss R—— were taken, the former in the note before quoted, supplies me with the following information. “He, you may remember, was the person, who superintended the operations of the boatmen”—launched and manned the boats—testimony which Captain Hawes honorably confirmed, assuring me that “It was in great measure by the exertions of Mr. Hannay, that so many boats both preceded and followed him to the wreck.” He too was presented with ten pounds.

Mr. John Oke, David Adair, and David Armstrong were the first to notice the “Orion’s” near approach to the harbour. Mr. J. Oke “was sitting on his bed reading;” David Adair “was in an upper room in his house, baiting lines;” and David Armstrong “was unwell and walking about the room,”*—when the noise of a steamer arrested their attention, and led each of them, in their different places, to look out, in order to see her pass by. She soon appeared; and, to their great surprise, was rapidly making her way as if right for the rocks. They ran out as quickly as possible; but ere any of them had well left the door of their house, the dreadful crash sounded in their ears, announcing (too plainly to doubt) what had happened. Without loss of time Mr. Oke and Adair hastened to

* Shaw’s Justiciary Reports. Part IV., 414-5.

a boat, and were the *first* to reach the sinking vessel; while David Armstrong with equal promptness and prudence *first* roused up Captain Hawes and Mr. Hannay, and *gave the alarm*—and then rushed to a boat after Mr. Oke and Adair.

The names of the other boatmen, who were also soon at work, are—

James Davidson,	William Alexander,
James Adair,	Hugh Alexander,
James Craford,	Willam Wallace,
John Craford,	John Mc. Carlie,
Hugh Craford,	Allen Auld,
Andrew Mc. Dowell,	Hugh Alexander, Sen.,
Thomas Mc. Mickan,	Hugh Alexander, Jun.,
James Rankin,	James Jess,
Daniel Alexander,	William Puffel.

These men formed the crew of eleven boats, including the government harbour boat. Mr. Robertson, and Mr. John Oke (as before stated), also Mr. Smilie, were in the boats at the wreck.

Mr. Hannay, Alex. Mc. Culloch, James Edgar, and William Peddlie, were employed in launching the boats and sending them out.

The government harbour boat brought in about 30, the other ten boats about 90; in all, 120.

Indeed, and without further multiplying instances, it is only just to the whole population of Portpatrick and the neighbourhood to say, that “*they did what they could,*” and thereby *proved*, beyond the possibi-

lity of doubt, that in our being thrown upon their shore “we came among a Christian people.”

It was also evidently providential—a mark of God’s goodness—that our acquaintance commenced with them at that particular time—the *preparation week for the Holy Communion*, which, in Scotland, is not administered more than once, or twice, in the year. On that week, Wednesday is always set apart as a day of humiliation and religious observance. To the *inhabitants*, how irresistible was such an opportunity to act the *neighbour’s* part, and show forth those feelings of Christian love, which the sacramental feast requires; and to the *strangers*, who remained over the week, how inviting were the devotional exercises of that season, and how conducive to the cultivation of a serious and grateful frame of mind! That the excitement, and necessary duties to the sick, dying, and dead, interfered much with the quietness of the preparation week, as usually kept in Scotland, is very probable. Many of those, who would have been thankful to join in public worship, and to hear God’s word, were, no doubt, necessitated to attend to other matters,—such as waiting by the shore for the recovery of lost treasure, or preparing for the removal and interment of the remains of beloved relatives. Of the assembled worshippers some, perhaps, found it by no means easy to listen abstractedly to the spiritual counsel given—their minds being disturbed by the constantly reviving images of all

that had passed the day before. Even the Ministers themselves, I can well believe, were too much harassed, mentally and bodily, to set forth, with anything like their usual collectedness, those heart-stirring truths they were wont to deliver.

Still it must have been, of all others, a most instructive season—a season well calculated not only to confirm the faith of true believers, whether ministers or people; but also to arouse the hearts of the “careless ones,” and to stimulate the “*almost*” to seek that they might become “*altogether Christians*.”

Early on the Fast-day morning had been landed on the pier about fifty or sixty coffins, which were immediately carried up to an apartment adjoining the one where the dead were lying. As each successive group of mourners afterwards proceeded, in deepest grief, to the newly made grave, what reflecting mind among the saved—what looker-on among the inhabitants of that quiet little place—could help wondering whither had fled the soul—the never dying part? Which of them could refrain from putting to himself the question, “Suppose the mourners had been the mourned, and the lookers-on the lamented—what would have been the result? Where should we be?” Such thoughts, we may hope, suggesting the vital importance of having a living interest in the Redeemer of sinners, would strongly enforce the exhortations of their ministers, to make good use of the Christian privileges then within their reach: and probably

already it has been found, that the many sudden deaths in the water have been blessed of God, to the spiritual resurrection of far more on shore: for—"His ways are not our ways. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways than our ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts."*

A second visit, *on the anniversary of my first*, to that now more than ever interesting village, afforded me an opportunity to ascend once more the hill before described.† When I first made the attempt to form an accurate idea of the wrecked "Orion's" position, the masts were then visible, and the boatmen busily engaged getting out of her whatever portions of cargo could be obtained. When I again stood there, gazing on the well known spot where she went down, no masts could be seen, nor even the large buoy, which has for so many months marked her position—the former having been cut away a few days after the wreck—the latter having been rent from its hold by the late storm. It is true, the Admiralty lost no time to offer assistance to the owners, to raise her up. Three steam sloops and a dock-yard lighter were immediately sent, to act with the Admiralty establishment at Portpatrick; but all attempts were vain. A strong gale from the west rose about the second week after the wreck, and compelled those war vessels to run from the coast: and next day many broken por-

* Isa. lv. 8, 9.

† Page 34.

tions were floating thickly on the waves, and drifting in all directions. The doors with their gilded and decorated panels, the carved work of the cabins, the velvet sofa cushions, boxes and packages of various kinds, together with the luggage of the passengers, &c., &c., were either picked up by adventurous boatmen on the rough water, or swept away to the various bays along the coast.

There was some apprehension in the minds of those who felt an interest in the morality and character of the people, lest the temptation to pillage, which all this presented, should lead to discreditable scenes; especially as not a generation had passed since "wrecking" in that district was accounted neither very immoral nor very disreputable. To not a few of the poorest, a little thing, seemingly belonging to nobody, might be felt to be a great gain. Accordingly, very early in the day, Captain Hawes gave the strictest orders to his men, to put a stop to even the slightest appearance of any such evil. Boys, carrying splinters up the street, were directed to take them to an appointed place. "Let us take care of the chips," said he, "and the boards will take care of themselves." He then drew out a short appeal to the people, which was signed by himself, the two ministers, and Mr. Murdoch, the resident justice of the peace—and was afterwards posted in a public and conspicuous place in the village.

Every one must admire the wisdom of this step—

and still more the general feeling of honor and honesty, and the prevalence of Christian principle, which, when so appealed to, could secure (even on the part of many, of questionable appearance, who crowded to the scene from distant towns and villages,) an entire freedom from any acts of plundering, that would be considered in the least degree worthy of notice—amid the confusion and temptations of many days and nights. *Kind, honest, Christian people of Portpatrick*, may all shipwrecked sufferers have friends *like you* near at hand!

In evident hopelessness of ever recovering anything more, of importance, from the ill-fated vessel,—before three months had elapsed, the whole remaining wreck was sold, by the owners, for the sum of about £300:* and after that time, whatever additional luggage was found in her, a salvage had to be paid for it, proportionate to its supposed value.

Meanwhile, there was a constant influx of visitors, (many from great distances) to see the place, where so calamitous an event had occurred: and, as they looked at the buoy which marked the spot, and saw the divers busy at work, going down to her, or bringing up something from her, the exclamation of all was substantially the same—“How is it possible, that a steamer could approach so near, and be wrecked there, *on a fine summer morning in June!*” Again

* She was originally built at the cost of about £40,000.

and again this question has been asked, and will continue to be asked. Nor can any answer be returned but this—It was rendered possible by the shameful negligence of the appointed managers of the vessel, and by the inscrutable wisdom of that God, who is above all, and orders all things in heaven and earth.

And it is only in accordance with the excellent laws, customs, and principles of our native land, that,—whilst *gross negligence*, on the part of those entrusted with the lives of their fellow-creatures, *shall not go unpunished*,—so *active and efficient service, in saving life, shall not go unrewarded*. Thus, several small sums of money were left at the time, or sent soon afterwards, to be distributed by the General Superintendent of the Harbour and others; and subsequently the sum of £203. 10s. was raised by subscription, and divided among the boatmen by a committee of the subscribers, who visited Portpatrick for the purpose. To some the reward was given in money; to others in food and clothing; and to others in the shape of a new boat. Most of the names of those, who were thus rewarded, have been already mentioned.* Respecting two of them, James and John Craford, I have to append sorrowful intelligence, conveyed to me soon afterwards by a friend in my own neighbourhood. “Did you see in the papers, that *two* of the fishermen, who had been most active in the rescue of the ‘Orion’s’ pas-

* See page 72-3.

sengers, and had been rewarded with a new boat by the committee, have been *drowned*! The reward of their courage was ready. It was to be the last time of taking out their crazy little vessel. They were in high spirits while fishing; when, suddenly, a squall came on, and they perished in the stormy waters,—about three miles from their own homes.” “Who can understand the dealings of the Lord!”

These men, on receiving the promise of a new boat, were so delighted, that they resolved to call her, when launched, the “*Young Orion*.”

Such, indeed, was the gratification of all the rewarded boatmen, that, as the committee were about to leave the house where the distribution had been made, they presented themselves in a body, and said to Captain Hawes, “Will you please, sir, to tell these gentlemen, that we are very thankful for what has been bestowed on us, and well pleased with the way it has been divided?”

Their thanks were accordingly very feelingly, though briefly, expressed by Captain Hawes. And Mr. Thomson then addressed them as follows:—

“MY FRIENDS,—It will afford us great pleasure, to let the subscribers know the satisfaction, which you have now expressed, at the rewards which you have now received for your conduct at the wreck of the ‘Orion.’ The public, by their willing liberality on this occasion, wish not only to reward you, but to show to the fishermen and others round our coasts, that they are as ready to reward disinterested

conduct such as yours, as they are to abhor the inhumanity of those who, on such occasions, disregarding alike the voice of their own conscience, and the cry of their helpless fellow-creatures, think only of plunder, and bring reproach and shame on themselves and on our country. May the name of wrecker be never more heard on our coasts. We who are here saved from the wreck, can bear willing testimony to your disinterested and valuable efforts on that fearful morning, and not only you, the boatmen, but the whole population of Portpatrick, young and old, as if animated by one noble spirit of benevolence and kindness, sought only how they might succour, comfort, and animate their weak and almost naked fellow-creatures, so suddenly and fearfully thrown upon their kindness. The committee trust, that all who exerted themselves in saving life, or in succouring those who were saved, have in some measure been recognized, either now, or by those whom they succoured at the time. But—if we may judge of your character by your conduct at that time,—the satisfaction of your own minds, and the universal commendations which we can assure you have been bestowed upon the whole people of Portpatrick, must be more highly prized by you, than any rewards that can be bestowed upon you. Your conduct, and all that has flowed from it, forms another incentive to us all, to have confidence in the wisdom and goodness of the Great Ruler of the Universe,—who, in His great care for the welfare of his creatures, and desire that man should be kind to his fellow-man, so arranges providence, that rarely, if ever, does a really disinterested action go unrewarded, but, by numberless means, HE shows the approval of that love and kindness that prompts, to generous action; and it is only our own selfishness that prevents us reaping the full fruits of His benevolent designs, and our own short-

sightedness that keeps us from seeing the universal and beautiful accomplishment of His justice and goodness in this respect. Permit us to press you to an habitual cultivation of the generous impulses that prompted you on that morning, and to a wise and industrious use of the public liberality which has now been bestowed upon you. Listen to the teachings of your two pastors now present. They have your welfare warmly at heart, and will be glad to aid you in your temporal, and still more in your spiritual, interests."

Mr. Kidston also, briefly, expressed the pleasure he felt in being the medium of bestowing upon them the reward which they so richly deserved.*

Long will that meeting be remembered, at Portpatrick; and longer still the awful event and attendant circumstances, which caused it to take place. Fathers will speak of it to their sons, and mothers to their daughters, after many years have passed away.

The *Orion's rock*, as it may henceforth with great propriety be called; the spot where she sank in the deep waters; and the number of human beings, living and dead, brought to shore; the story of these will be handed down from generation to generation.

* North British Mail and Glasgow Daily Advertiser. Dec. 2, 1850.

CHAPTER VIII.

AND *what then is the most important lesson, which all this sets forth, for our conviction and instruction?*

On my return home, I had told to many a kind inquirer my own share in the sad disasters and merciful deliverance attending the wreck of the "Orion;" and not a few were the tears of sympathy it called forth: but,—further visible evidences of the results of the wreck arriving (first the small leather bag, at the end of the fortnight—and next the large carpet bag at the end of three months):—these dripping relics coming to hand, *just as they had been taken up from the wreck*, produced a still more sorrowful impression upon the minds of those who stood by, whilst they were being opened and their contents examined. The carpet bag, I had long ceased to expect. And yet two reasons made me anxious to possess it: one, in order to regain a dear old Polyglot Bible, which had been my travelling companion on many occasions and for many years, and moreover carried along with it interesting associations of college days; the other, that I might secure—as a VOICE FROM THE WATERS—a sermon enclosed therein, not only because it had been preached

on the two successive Sundays, previous to my leaving home—(*i. e.* at my own Church and at the Chapel connected with the Deaf and Dumb Institution and Blind Asylum)—but also, and especially, because it contained some remarks most applicable to the whole event, and appeared to me, after that event had taken place, like ———. But the reader shall judge for himself.

The *text*, taken from Joshua xxiv., 14, at once suggested to the mind, the picture of that aged Patriarch, standing up in the midst of all Israel—(on a spot, not more remarkable for the exquisite beauty of the surrounding scenery, than for the solemn and interesting circumstances bound up in its history,) and *there addressing them for the last time*. A picture most affecting and instructive. And when the words, he was commissioned to deliver to them, were taken into consideration—his allusion to all that God had done for their fathers in Egypt and in the wilderness—and his solemn appeal to their hearts, *in which was still lurking the spirit of idolatry*; the *fact* of the *same spirit* being equally apparent in the life and conduct of every unregenerate person among professing Christians immediately presented itself to the view,—and led me to draw the following inference—“So that *now* also, as in time of old, we may regard Joshua ‘dead as yet speaking’ with all the truth and force of an inspired teacher. Indeed,—*if, with him, the whole company of holy patriarchs, prophets, and apostles,*

who have long since gone to their everlasting rest and peace, were permitted again to visit this earth, and address the sons of men,—they would (I am persuaded) join most earnestly and unanimously in this proclamation—

‘SERVE YE THE LORD.’”

It may here further be added, as my firm belief, that—if the broken pieces of wreck, still floating upon the water, could speak, and if those passengers, who were lost in the “Orion,” could return, and once more address their fellow-creatures;—*they*, too, would take up the language of this solemn admonition—“*Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; put away the gods which your fathers served,*” (or whatever sinful practice, you have learned from them,) “and SERVE YE THE LORD.” For *human life*, like the vessel’s course on the ocean, is far from being certain of continuance for a single day. Some sad accident may occur to terminate it in a moment. The storm of pestilence, of famine, or of war, may forcibly interrupt its progress: or the sunken rock of some latent disease may suddenly shake to pieces what appeared till then a strong constitution, a frame likely for many years of health and enjoyment. A thousand liabilities and dangers are strewn in the way: and, at the very best and the very longest, your continuance here is but as nothing compared with eternity. If, therefore, you would be prepared for the worst: if you would have a *place of*

refuge, comfort, and peace, to look forward to, and near at hand, when the hour of trial comes: if you would have secured to you "mansions in heaven" when the things of earth are vanishing out of your sight:—endeavour to profit by the present opportunities and means of grace, which God has put within your reach; "lay hold of the hope set before you" in Christ Jesus, the Saviour of sinners;—"and SERVE YE THE LORD."

Such is the *lesson*, which the whole narrative is intended to enforce: such the *duty*, which the event narrated evidently sets forth.

May the writer and the reader be benefited thereby; and be led to live for another world!

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen." Eph. vi, 24.

ADDENDA,

Gleaned from "Shaw's Justiciary Reports," Part IV.

C. Gipp Robinson, R.N., "who has been employed for a considerable number of years making a hydrographic survey for the Admiralty, including the coast of Wigtonshire, is of opinion, that the course of a vessel, on *a fine night* (due regard being felt for the safety of the lives on board) should not have been nearer Portpatrick than a mile and a half." Page 403.

"The firm of Caird and Co., engineers and iron shipbuilders, Greenock, built the 'Orion' in the years 1846-7. She was a ship of 805 tons, O. M. The vessel was divided into five water tight compartments." Page 403.

John Macdonald, boatbuilder, of Greenock,—"*made the boats of the 'Orion;' and, having measured one of the life boats, found it could hold between 70 and 80 persons: and D. Walker, one of the sailors belonging to the 'Orion,' said—"if the (quarter) boat had been all right, she might have held about 30 persons. From the testimony of these witnesses it clearly appears then,—that, as the two life boats could hold about (75×2) 150, and the two quarter boats could hold about (30×2) 60, or in all 210 persons,—all the passengers might have been saved, had the four boats been lowered properly, and in time. Pages 404, 408.*

D. Walker also testifies that, "Captain Henderson was giving directions, such as calling on the boats to come across to the ship, and pick up passengers," and that "he remained clinging to the mast." Page 405.

James Stewart, another sailor, said, "he heard the Captain's voice after she struck, ordering the boats to be cleared away." Page 413.

HOW they were cleared away, has been already shewn!!

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